

Rand might make earlier court date

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Accused kidnapper Andre Rand could appear in Staten Island Criminal Court earlier than expected, according to District Attorney William Murphy.

The Associated Press quoted a Daily News report today that two Kings County psychiatrists have found Rand fit to stand trial and would present that finding Friday to Judge Michael Brennen in Stapleton Criminal Court.

"I'm not aware (of those findings)...But if there's been a determination he may be brought to court today," Murphy said this morning.

Rand is charged with the July 9 abduction of 12-year-old Jennifer Schweiger, whose body was found Aug. 12 by volunteer searchers in a wooded area on the grounds of the Staten Island Developmental Center.

The body was found near a campsite used by Rand.

According to police, Jennifer, who had Down's syndrome, was last seen near her Westerleigh home walking hand-in-hand with the 43-year-old transient.

Detectives are studying more than 30 cases - including those of four missing Staten Island girls.

Investigators have singled out the girls' cases due to intriguing similarities surrounding each disappearance, including Rand's "somehow being placed in the area" from which each girl disappeared.

Medical examiners have yet to determine Jennifer's cause of death.

Since Aug. 5, Rand has been undergoing psychiatric evaluation at Kings County Hospital.

On Jan. 21, 1972, Rand was conditionally released from prison after serving approximately 17 months on a sex abuse charge. He had been convicted of sexually attacking a 9-year-old girl in the Bronx in May of 1969.