

## Choke

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our attention.

Images of the choke hold obtained by *The Skanner News* show the school official, identified as Vice Principal Alfredo Quintero, with both arms locked around the neck of the 15-year-old student as a second student holds the victim's hands in a more relaxed gesture.

Debra McFarland says the other student in the photo was a stranger unknown to the family who was begging the school official to let go of her daughter's neck.

With the vice principal bending her backward as he held her by the neck with both arms and the other girl pulling her hair, McFarland's daughter says she felt like she was being 'jumped'

McFarland says her daughter had been feuding with another girl on Facebook and that their conflict spilled over to the school; they had been fighting that day in the cafeteria, but they had been stopped by a security guard.

"If you want to fight her, fight her after school because I don't want to do the paperwork," McFarland says the guard told the girls.

According to witnesses, the two girls later faced off in front of a crowd that included at least one teacher and one security guard who both declined to stop the conflict.

After McFarland's daughter popped the other girl in the face the fight stopped, the mother says – until the vice principal came running from his office and bumped into the

daughter, sending her into the other girl and starting the fight up again.

With the vice principal bending her backward as he held her by the neck with both arms and the other girl pulling her hair, McFarland's daughter says she felt like she was being "jumped."

But even when the other girl stopped the vice principal did not; that's when the second girl came closer and tried to calm the situation. McFarland says, "The young girl in the picture was asking, 'why are you choking her?'"

McFarland says Quinteros held her daughter for about 30 seconds and aside from a trip to the emergency room for an asthma attack, she was not physically harmed – but now has chronic anxiety.

"The other girl had said, 'f\*\*\* your grandmother' – and her grandmother had just died a few days earlier," McFarland says.

"This replays in my head when I try to sleep at night," McFarland says. "What if one day my child doesn't come home from school?"

McFarland says the incident – and a series of what she says are unethical moves by officials at Madison High School — has derailed her daughter's excellent grades and given the teen chronic anxiety.

"Our first thought is to stop the physical abuse going on," said Portland Public Schools spokeswoman Christine Miles.

"We are continuing to look at how we can improve our practices in these types of situations," she said. "Neither one of the girls fighting that day was suspended, they were put into mediation."

She said the district is still investigating what happened, and is examining the restorative justice programs that have just been put into place to help avoid violent conflict over the long term.

Because it involves both sides coming into an agreement



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over a given conflict, Miles said, "It is not a simple process, and it is not an easy fix."

The 1985 Portland Police choke hold death of off duty security guard Lloyd D. Stevenson – who had been helping a store owner subdue a suspected thief – made headlines even in *The New York Times*.

Read the rest online at [www.theskanner.com](http://www.theskanner.com)



## Kidney

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population, 35 percent of individuals with kidney failure on dialysis are African American. Chronic kidney disease often worsens over time. If it progresses to irreversible kidney failure, the person will die unless they receive regular dialysis treatments or a kidney transplant. However, kidney damage can be slowed down or stopped if people get diagnosed early and, like Brown, change their lifestyles to include healthier habits.

By 2010 – after Brown had moved to Washington state – she learned her kidneys were failing. She would need dialysis to replace the function her kidneys no longer provided. Brown opted to do dialysis at home under the guidance of Northwest Kidney Centers rather than receiving treatments at a clinic, as most people do.

Brown said if she can lose weight and work on her health problems, others with diabetes and kidney disease can too

With her background as a nursing assistant and medical assistant – and the help of her husband, Eli, 20-year-old daughter, Lenore, and 15-year-old son, Sonne – Brown became comfortable using the home dialysis machine five days a week.

But that isn't all. Hearing that she could possibly receive a kidney/pancreas transplant, Brown took another step for personal responsibility and better health. At 235 pounds, she had to lose weight to remain a

transplant candidate. Brown tried to do it through diet and exercise, but couldn't get drop all the weight she needed to. In August 2012 she opted for gastric bypass surgery.

Finally she qualified. "I was transplanted with a new kidney and pancreas at the end of October 2014, and so far, so good. No more dialysis and, more importantly, no more insulin!" There are multiple drugs she'll take for the rest of her life to keep her body from rejecting the transplant, but they

are mostly pills and not frequent shots.

Brown said if she can lose weight and work on her health problems, others with diabetes and kidney disease can too.

"Making the first appointment is the hardest part. After that, it all just falls into place," she said. "Once you make that first appointment, there are a million hands that are on you trying to help you move it along. That makes it easier. Diabetes or even kidney failure doesn't have to be a death sentence. It's very manageable. It's doable."

Northwest Kidney Centers' website offers information about kidney disease, diagnosis, treatment, classes and recipes for easy and delicious dishes. Visit [www.nwkidney.org](http://www.nwkidney.org).

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possibilities that happen through the process," Buri said. "It's been hard for us to really convey the entire process when we are talking to tenants that don't have an immediate situation."

CAT is the only statewide, tenant-led tenant's rights organization. They educate about these rights through their Renters Rights Hotline 503-288-0130, their Landlord-Tenant Law Booklet and community outreach workshops.

Often, the CAT volunteers will help tenants write letters to their landlords and support them through the eviction legal process.

Buri acknowledges that evictions are often a terrifying experience and tries to alleviate that with education.

"Not a lot of people know about (eviction), it carries a lot of weight in terms of losing your housing and destabilizing communities," Buri said. "Sometimes it can feel like a dark hole for people."

Evictions are a part of a much larger affordable housing crisis. Research from the National Association of Realtors (NAR) has

found that skyrocketing rent costs are far outpacing wage growth. Between 2009 and 2014, Portland rents have increased 20.45 percent, the 6th highest increase in the nation.

Lawrence Yun, chief economist with NAR said these rent increases make it hard-

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er for renters to become homeowners, effectively losing access to wealth through fixed-rate mortgages. In addition, the NAR found too few affordable homes for first-time homebuyers.

These homes in low-income areas which used to be purchased by first-time homebuyers have been increasingly acquired by developers. A recent report by Governing magazine found Portland to be the most gentrified city in the United States.

The report tracked census data from 2000 to 2010 and determined that 58 percent of Portland's lower-priced neighborhoods had been gentrified. The national gentrification average is a 20 percent of neighborhoods.

When facing a possible eviction, Buri suggests two things: calling the Renter's

Rights Hotline to speak with an evictions specialist, and preparing good documentation of your rental agreement and landlord communications.

"If the tenant and the landlord have a good communication with thorough documentations, sometimes it is much more likely to come up with an agreement with your landlord and negotiate something long term," Buri said.

Landlords need to provide only a 30-day

notice to increase rent. Coming to an agreement with a landlord can give more time for the tenants to find other housing.

Tenants are not often aware of all of their rights. Buri said most people don't know that a landlord needs to give 24-hours notice before entering your home.

People with disabilities also have housing protection through the Fair Housing Act. One of the stories featured in the comic shows a disabled man in a wheelchair requesting a reasonable accommodation to avoid eviction.

"Evictions can be very traumatizing, or inevitable, often. We hope to at least be able to help tenants that can avoid an eviction arm themselves with the right information and preparation so they can make the right decisions," Buri said.

The "Know Your Rights: Don't Get Evicted" comic is part of a year-long partnership between the Community Alliance of Tenants and Know Your City. The stories were developed by the first-hand accounts of people called the CAT Renter's Rights Hotline.