



Expert: Philadelphia abductee did good job fighting back

Carlesha Freeland found alive in Maryland

KANSAS CITY, Mo. —Carlesha Freeland, the young woman who survived a kidnapping ordeal that started in Philadelphia and ended in Maryland, likely saved her own life by fighting back the moment she realized her life was in danger, an expert in self-defense said.

A self-defense expert says a Philadelphia woman who survived being abducted off the streets did a lot of the right things that helped lead to her recovery.

Surveillance video of the abduction shows how Freeland resisted in those early moments.

Her resistance allowed cameras to capture more video of the abduction and giving law enforcement more clues about the abductor.

A self-defense instructor who saw the video said that even when Freeland was in her captor's control, she did the right things.

"She actually kicked the windows out, which was another indicator for law enforcement later on that was actually the (suspect's) car because the windows were missing," said Jill Leiker, a self-defense instructor from the Ali Kemp Foundation.

She said anyone in Freeland's situation should have one goal in mind.

"The first thing you should be thinking is, 'How am I going to get away from this person?'" Leiker said.

"(Be) looking for the escape route, constantly looking for the escape route."

Leiker said she has talked to abduction survivors to learn from their experiences escaping a captor.

She said she shares that information in her self-defense classes.

A Take Defense class for teenage girls and women is planned Nov. 15 at Oxford Middle School at 125th Street and Switzer Road in Overland Park. The class, which runs from 10 a.m. to noon, is offered in partnership with the Ali Kemp Foundation, Johnson County Parks and Recreation Department and Leawood Parks and Recreation.

There is no charge for the class, but organizers said donations are appreciated.