

US Authorities Blame Parents For Migrant Kids' Deaths

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The U.S. authorities, rather than improving their immigration policies, have sought to shift the blame for the deaths of migrant children to the parents.

From Wednesday all the detained migrant children under the custody of the United States Border Patrol, will go through more rigorous medical check-ups. This measure came after two Guatemalan children died while under U.S. custody a few days apart.

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Secretary of Homeland Security, Kirstjen Nielsen said in a statement, “This tragedy, the death of a child in government custody is deeply concerning and heartbreaking. In the last 24 hours, I have directed a series of additional actions to care for those who enter our custody.”

She said that the Department of Homeland Security has been investigating the cases.

She also has “personally engaged with the Centers for Disease Control to request

that their experts investigate the uptick in sick children crossing our borders.”

Felipe Gomez-Alonzo, an eight-year-old [Guatemalan migrant boy died early on Christmas Day](#) after being detained by the United States border agents. His death followed the death in early December of [seven-year-old Jakelin Caal](#), also from Guatemala. She died of dehydration after being detained along with her father by U.S. border agents in a remote part of New Mexico.

Rather than recognizing the way U.S. border authorities treat immigrants who have the right under international law to seek asylum, Nielson, shifted the burden onto the immigrant parents who “bring their children on a dangerous and illegal journey” adding that these parents do not face consequences for their actions.

The unempathetic comments come as Felipe's mother, back in Guatemala faces the consequence of never seeing her son again. “I’m sad and in despair over the death of my son,” the boy’s 32-year-old mother, Catarina Alonzo, told Reuters by phone from her home in the tiny village of Yalambojoch, speaking through a translator because of her limited Spanish.

The Secretary goes further to say: "Our system has been pushed to a breaking point by those who seek open borders. Smugglers, traffickers, and their own parents put these minors at risk by embarking on the dangerous and arduous journey north ... Given the remote locations of their illegal crossing and the lack of resources, it is even more difficult for our personnel to be first responders," said the secretary.

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