



Written by [Kelly Holt](#) on August 31, 2010

U.S. Consulate Staff to Send Children Out of Monterrey

After a kidnapping attempt outside an elite private school in Monterrey, the U.S. government told consulate staff to send their children out of the northern Mexican city, according to a recent Reuters report. The school was one attended by staff children.

Since the start of this year drug violence has escalated in Monterrey, which is in the state of Nuevo Leon. Monterrey is Mexico's business capital and wealthiest city, and was once considered one of Latin America's safest.

"U.S. government personnel from the consulate general are not permitted to keep their minor dependents in Monterrey," Reuters quoted a Mexico City-based U.S. Embassy spokeswoman saying. "As of September 10, no minor dependents, no children of U.S. government employees will be permitted in Monterrey."

U.S. school-children were not apparently the targets of this kidnapping attempt. Suspected drug hitmen attacked a group of security guards working for Latin America's top beverage maker, Femsa, outside the American School in Monterrey August 20, in what the consulate said was "an attempted kidnapping targeting the relatives of a local business executive."

A split between the powerful Gulf cartel and its former allies, the Zetas, has turned into all-out war, the two factions fighting over smuggling routes into the United States across northeastern Mexico where there have been more than 450 drug killings this year. Monterrey, a major city in the region, has been sucked into the conflict. It lies less than 150 miles from the Texas border crossing at Laredo, where U.S. Interstate 35, the contested NAFTA Superhighway crosses into Mexico.

Last week the bodies of 72 migrants were discovered east of Monterrey, suspected to be the victims of drug hitmen.

The week before, the town of Santiago, near Monterrey lost its Mayor to a drug killing.





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