

# Alex Zavala

**The NICU Dad**  
My NICU Journey

1



2

## Disclosure

- Alex Zavala does not have any financial arrangement or affiliations with a commercial entity.

3

### Beginning/ History

December 2012 we found out we were pregnant

Mia was 8 years old- Premie  
30 wks 3 lbs. 6 oz.

High risk pregnancy

Doctors/Specialists

Thursday 27 week FFN test

Sunday- Registered for baby  
shower



4

# The Call

Monday June 10, 2013

Phone call- 9 a.m./ Rush to hospital

See my wife for the first time.

Emergency C-section

Pre-op

5



6



7

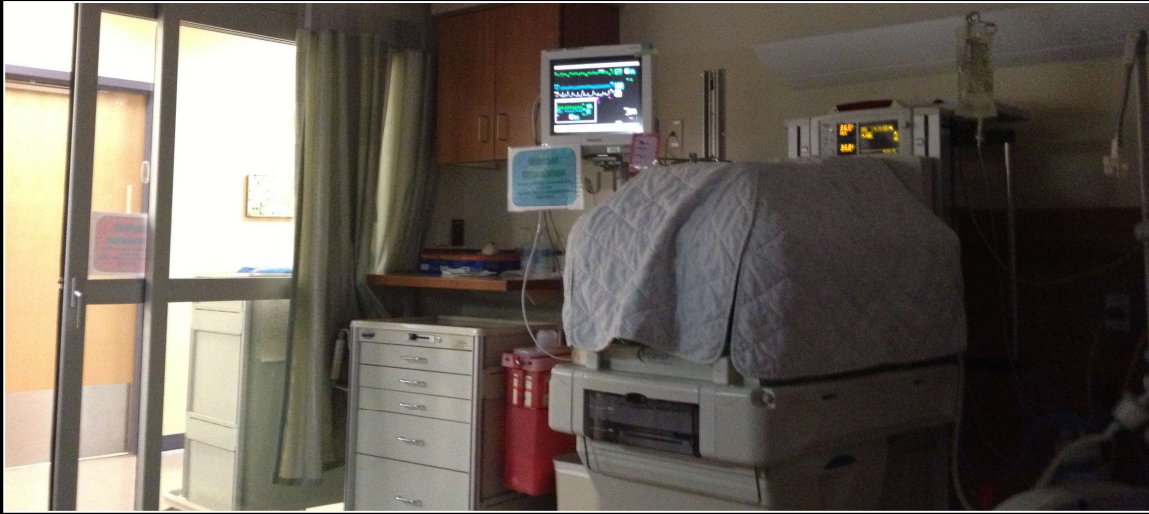


## NICU Dad Shuffle

- Transport team

8





First time in the NICU

9



10



11



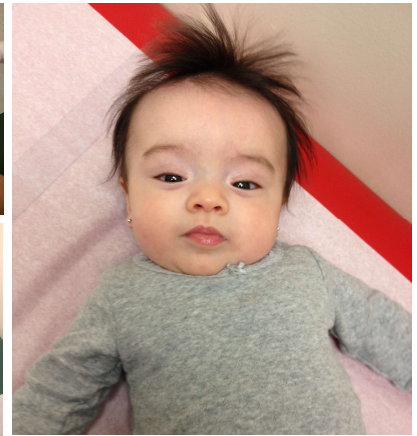
12



## Discharge



13



## Doctors Visits

14

## Social distanced for the first year



15



16



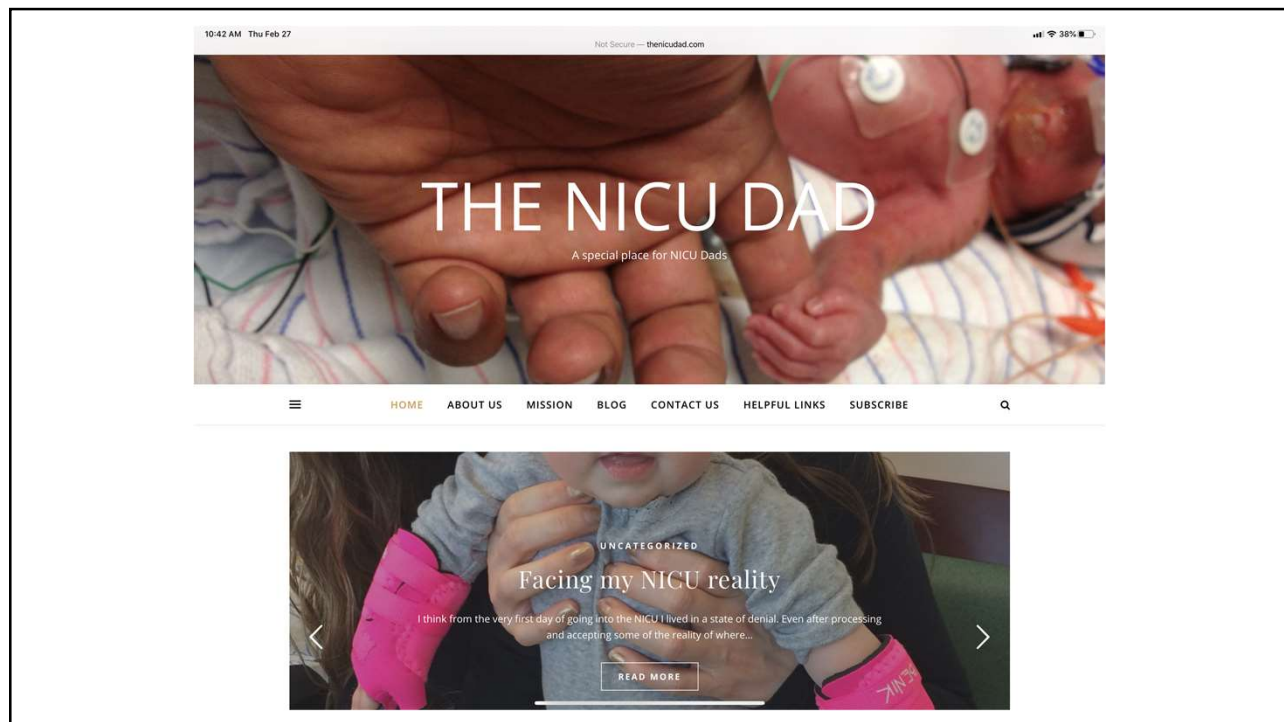
## Current NICU Involvement



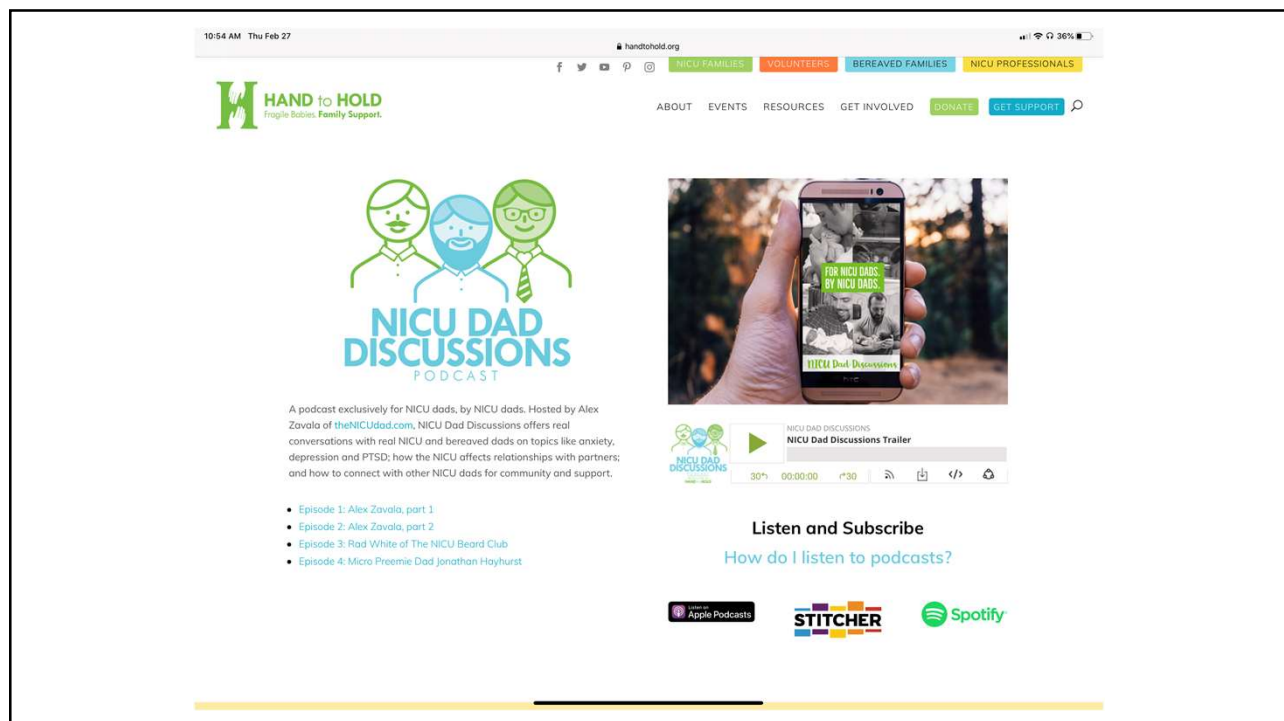
17



18



19



20





21



22



23



24



This was my NICU journey.

Now my focus is advocating for NICU dads  
and NICU dad support.

25

What does that mean?

---

**It means having discussions about what NICU dads experience.**

Disparities in communication and care

PTSD and trauma

Separation from family

And many more issues including a lack of post NICU care and support.

26

## Post NICU Support

Sent out into the world in charge of everything and everyone

For many NICU dads stress and anxiety increase after the NICU

Physical health- NICU Dad Bod

Mental and Emotional Health

- Fight or Flight, PTSD, and more

27

## Solutions

### Early intervention

Treated like an equal

### Physical/ Mental Conditioning

Therapy and fitness

### PEER TO PEER MENTORING!!!!!!!

### Continued emotional support

Counseling/ support groups/ becoming a mentor

28

