

AP digest

'Champions' saved David

HOUSTON — Neighbors rallied around a suburban Houston family for 12 years to help them protect and raise David, the immune-deficient child who spent all but a few days of his life in a sterile plastic bubble.

In an interview with the Houston Chronicle, David's parents credited the help of "champions" in providing heat and power to the boy's plastic bubble during times of bad weather or mechanical failure.

David, whose last name has been kept secret at the family's request, was born with no natural immunity against disease. Even ordinary germs that would be no problem for most people posed a threat for David. He was required to live in a plastic bubble that was filled with sterile, filtered air.

The bubble, built into the dining room of the family home, required a constant flow of filtered air. David's parents said they lived in fear of a power failure that would cause the air pumps to stop.

If the air flow was stopped for too long a period, David would have to be taken from the bubble and face the threat of infection in the dirty outside world.