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Spurgeon's Impact on the Community

The Wild captain has helped with programs meaningful to him and his family.

By **Heather Rule / Wild.com**
March 20, 2026

Whenever Wild captain Jared Spurgeon scored one of his six goals this season, his teammates celebrated with him on the ice, while fans at home and watching in the home arena cheered him on, too.

But the veteran defenseman has focused on more than just hockey in his more than 1,000 career NHL games while wearing a Wild sweater. He's been heavily involved in community outreach programs throughout his time in the State of Hockey, too.

This February, in between Wild practices and watching his teammates compete in the Olympics, Spurgeon visited patients at Gillette Children's in St. Paul. He went room-to-room visiting with children who have brain, bone and movement conditions who need specialized expertise.

"Any time you're there, you're just trying to change the day up a little bit," Spurgeon said. "But we had a lot of great conversations, met a lot of great people and just trying to take their minds off of what's going on."

Spurgeon met with families, greeted the kids, autographed hockey photo cards and handed out Wild swag to help brighten their days. It's a visit Spurgeon has made many times in the past.

"We try to get out there as much as possible," Spurgeon said, adding that he also hopes the length of visits might be shorter, if only because "that means there's not a lot of kids in there."

Gillette Children's specializes in treating complex brain, bone and movement conditions that begin in childhood. Spurgeon tries to make visits to Gillette Children's at least three times a year, although this season was a bit hectic with the condensed NHL schedule. The Olympic break in February was a good opportunity for him to make a visit.

For Spurgeon, a father of four, the visits to Gillette Children's are more about spending the time with kids and their families and discussing other things to help them focus on something else besides their treatment. A new face in the room in Spurgeon may help brighten their days as well.

He brings a friend along, too.

"Usually, Nordy's a fan favorite when I bring him in with me," Spurgeon said. "Having kids myself, obviously, you see some kids and what they're going through, and like I said, you try to get their minds off it a little bit."

Spurgeon jumped at the opportunity to work with Gillette Children's and make these visits. It's been a great partnership, he added.

Spurgeon recently played in his 1,000th NHL game, on March 14 against the New York Rangers at Grand Casino Arena, and the Wild plan to honor the team captain in a pre-game ceremony on Saturday when Minnesota hosts the Dallas Stars at 3 p.m.

Along with everything he's done on the ice, Spurgeon and his wife, Danielle, have given back through community work, too. As they've built their home in Minnesota while Spurgeon's built up his hockey career, the Spurgeons have also been very active in community outreach. That includes work with Gillette Children's; The Bond Between, a non-profit organization which focuses on building the bond between humans and animals; the Jeremiah Program, an organization whose mission is to disrupt the cycle of poverty for single mothers and their children, and more.

The Spurgeons tried to find the right fits for organizations and causes that mean something to them or speak to them in meaningful ways, Spurgeon said.

"Something you can put your full heart and effort into," he added. "My wife is part of the Jeremiah Program this year. We're big in rescuing dogs as well.

"It's just something that speaks to us, and obviously we try to help as much as possible."
Giving back to the community in this way isn't something Spurgeon has to do, but he recognizes the fortunate position he's in with the Wild organization. Growing up in Edmonton, a hockey town, he knows professional hockey players are also looked up to as people, not just hockey players.

Spurgeon is a true leader in the as the Wild's captain, which includes on the ice, off the ice and within the community. It's recognized by his teammates.

"He's an amazing person," said Wild defenseman Zach Bogosian. "He's been great in the community."

Wild coach John Hynes echoed that sentiment ahead of Spurgeon's 1,000th NHL game.
"He's a great human being," Hynes said. "He's a great player, but I think he cares about people. He does the

right things on and off the ice."

Spurgeon also tries to lead by example for his Wild teammates when it comes to his ability to give back to the community, like with the visits to Gillette Children's. Perhaps with Spurgeon simply going out and doing these things, it might encourage his teammates to consider finding something close to their hearts, too.

"This takes an hour or two hours out of your day every once in a while to change someone's day, month or if they're having a bad day to walk in there and change that up for them," Spurgeon said.

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