



# IDEAS TO ACTION FUND

BRINGING YOUR IDEAS TO LIFE

## UNPLUG and CONNECT - Screen Free Week

Final Report - Ideas to Action 2025

*By Sue Salzsieder, Chilton Elementary and Middle School Library, May 2026*

**Number of people involved in or impacted by the project since Ideas to Action funding:**

1,014

**Do you anticipate that your project will continue after Ideas to Action funding?**

Yes. Screen Free Week is a yearly program that I have run since 1994. I will continue to do it until I retire.

**Did your project encourage partnerships and collaborations with any community partners or other WiLS members? Who did you connect with during this process and how might you sustain those connections?**

I collaborate with the Chilton Public Library to encourage community participation and Calumet County Park Naturalist, Louise Marum, at Ledge View Nature Center, to encourage exercise and use of our beautiful county parks. I also include the private schools within our school district - Chilton Area Catholic School and Trinity Lutheran School.

**Thinking about your project, what was the most innovative part? What can you, or your community, do now that it couldn't before?**

The most innovative part of Screen Free Week is the way it transforms reducing screen time into a joyful, community-wide experience instead of simply asking families to "turn devices off." By offering creative, hands-on events like the Cardboard Challenge, makerspace activities, nature exploration, family game nights, and swimming, the week replaces screens with meaningful opportunities for connection, creativity, literacy, and play. The collaboration between schools, families, libraries, and community organizations creates a supportive environment where children and caregivers can rediscover the value of spending intentional time together.

## How do you think other WiLS members could use what you learned and accomplished at their own organizations?

Other WiLS members could use what we learned from Screen Free Week by creating community partnerships and offering simple, low-cost activities that encourage families to reconnect through literacy, creativity, and play. Our experience showed that successful engagement happens when events are inclusive, hands-on, and designed for the whole family rather than just students.

Libraries and schools could adapt ideas such as family game nights, makerspace activities, story and craft events, nature collaborations, or reading celebrations to fit their own communities and resources. We also learned that combining fun experiences with education about the effects of excessive screen time helps families feel empowered instead of criticized. By working with local libraries, schools, nature centers, and community groups, other organizations could build stronger family connections while promoting healthy, balanced habits that continue beyond a single week.

### Project product(s):

[Screen Free Week Sign-Up Form](#)

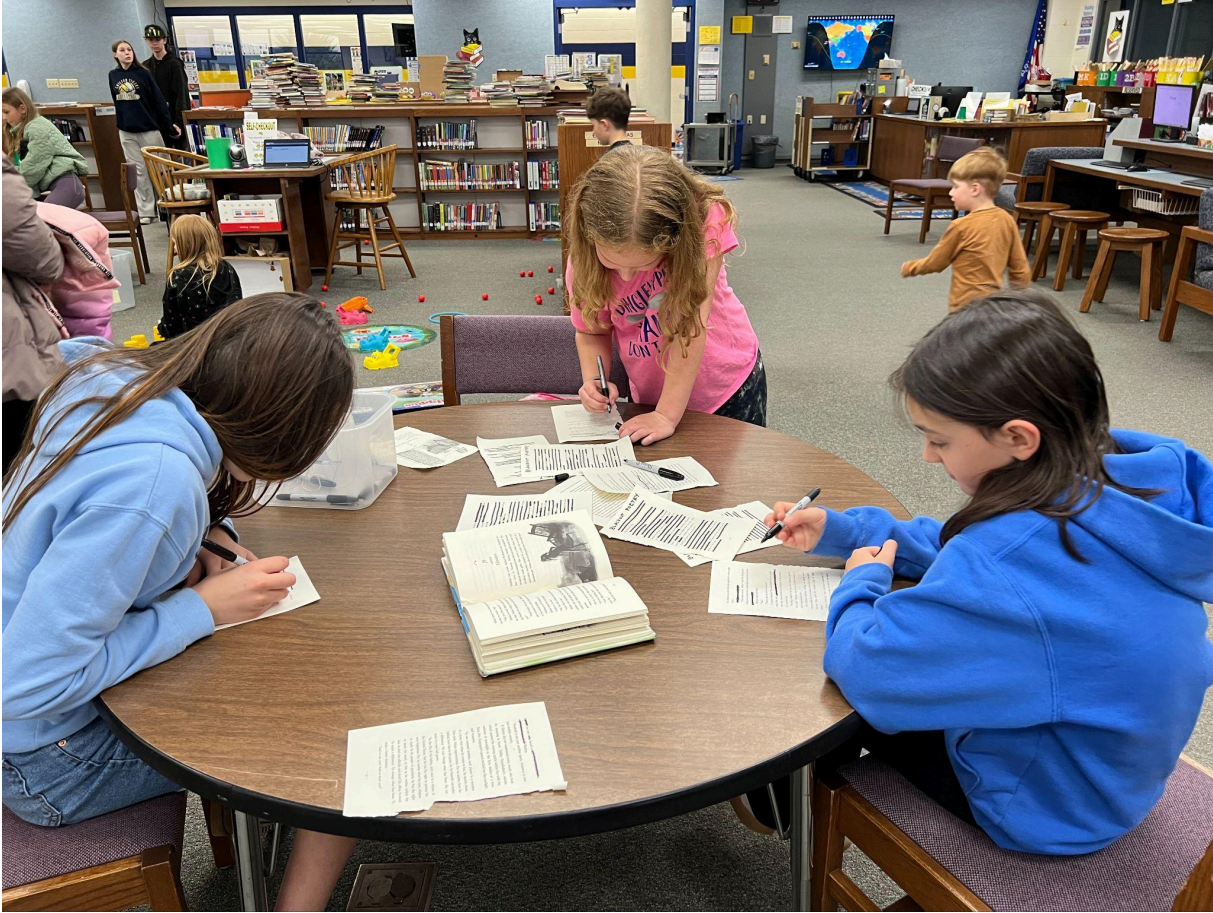
[Screen Free Week Video](#)

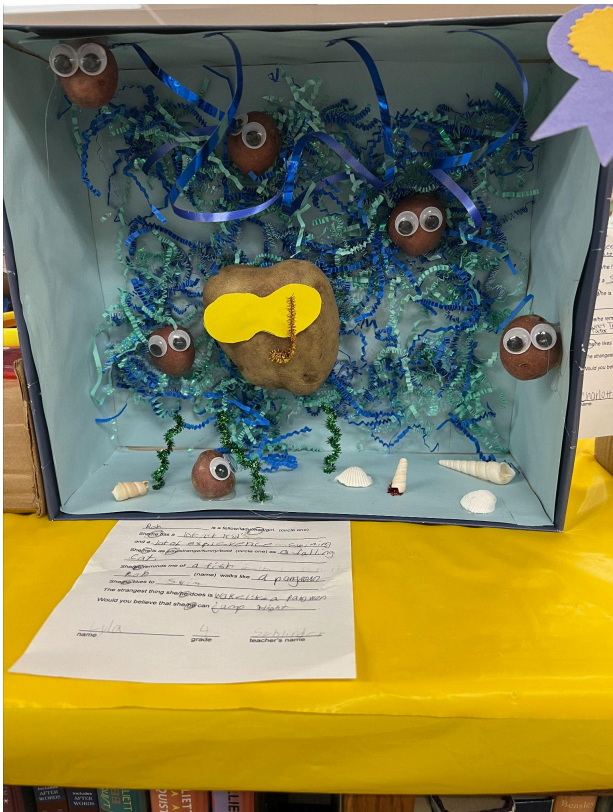
[Screen Free Week Facebook Images](#)

[Screen Free Week Materials](#)

### Photo Gallery:







# Read Around The School VOLUNTEERS

