Family Priority Worksheet

TogetherWell Family Wellness Practical Resource | Version 1.1

Resource type: Guided family reflection and prioritisation worksheet
Primary use: Couples, parents/caregivers, families and individuals reflecting on family wellbeing
Companion resources: Family Values, Vision & Direction Conversation Guide; Family Pattern Map; Simple Family Wellness Strategy Plan
Family Wellness connection: Whole Family Wellness Architecture
Positioning: Educational and developmental; non-diagnostic, non-psychometric, non-scored and non-norm-referenced

Not everything that matters needs attention at the same time.

Families can recognise several important needs at once and still struggle to decide where to begin. Communication may need attention. Money may be tight. Parenting may feel stressful. Extended-family expectations may be difficult. A major transition may be approaching. A family member may be exhausted. Something that is already working may also need deliberate protection.

This worksheet helps families move through three distinct questions:

CONCERN — What have we noticed?
PRIORITY — What deserves focused attention now?
CHANGE TARGET — What specifically do we want to strengthen or change?

For this resource, use:

NOTICE → CONSIDER → PRIORITISE → DEFINE → PREPARE

This is a resource-level planning prompt, not a new TogetherWell Family Wellness model.

PAGE 1 — NOTICE

What is happening in our family now?

1. Begin with strengths

Something in our family that is working well:

Something we want to protect:

A relationship, routine or family practice we appreciate:

A priority can involve strengthening something that is already working, not only fixing a problem.

For example, a family preparing for relocation may prioritise protecting couple connection or family routines before strain develops.

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2. What concerns, needs or transitions are getting our attention?

List up to five.

These may be corrective, developmental or preventive.

CONCERN / NEED 1

CONCERN / NEED 2

CONCERN / NEED 3

CONCERN / NEED 4

CONCERN / NEED 5

Examples may include:
repeated conflict;
financial pressure;
parenting disagreement;
exhaustion;
weak routines;
extended-family strain;
caregiving burden;
disconnection;
preparing for a new baby;
relocation or migration;
launching children into adulthood;
ageing-parent responsibilities;
retirement;
protecting family connection during a demanding season.

3. Is this the main issue—or part of a wider pattern or context?

Choose one concern.
The concern is:

What may be happening around it?

☐ Economic pressure
☐ Work demands
☐ Health
☐ Bereavement or loss
☐ Developmental stage
☐ Housing
☐ Migration/relocation
☐ Caregiving
☐ School demands
☐ Extended-family responsibilities

☐ Faith or cultural expectations
☐ Other: _____

Could this be part of a repeating pattern?

If the same interaction keeps repeating, use the Family Pattern Map separately.

Do not assume that every family difficulty is caused mainly by poor relationships. Structural and resource pressures can strongly shape family life.

PAGE 2 — CONSIDER

What makes something a priority?

A priority is not simply the problem that feels loudest.

Consider impact, urgency, importance, readiness, burden and influence.

4. Impact

Who is affected?

How persistent is the impact?

☐ Occasional
☐ Recurring
☐ Persistent

Does it spill into other areas of family life?

Who is carrying most of the burden?

Is a child, dependent adult or other less-powerful family member being significantly affected?

A problem can be quiet and still be important.

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5. Urgency

What could happen if we delay?

Can this reasonably wait while something else receives attention first?

Urgency is not the same as emotional intensity.

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6. Importance

Why does this matter to our family?

What value, responsibility, relationship or family direction does it affect?

If you have already used the Family Values, Vision & Direction Conversation Guide, connect the concern with what your family says matters.

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7. Readiness

Readiness does not decide whether an important issue matters.

It helps decide the next responsible step.

Ask:

Do we understand the issue well enough to act?

Are the necessary people able or willing to participate?

Do we need more information, support or assessment first?

A high-priority concern with low readiness may need preparation, support or referral, not postponement.

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8. Power and unheard voices

Before choosing the family priority, ask:

Whose perspective has not been heard?

Is someone afraid to disagree?

Is age, income, gender, status or authority dominating the decision?

Is one person carrying a disproportionate burden?

Children and adolescents may contribute information about their experience, but they should not be asked to choose between parents, assign blame or solve adult problems.

A family may sometimes proceed with a provisional priority even when everyone does not rank it identically.

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9. Look for a possible leverage point

Ask:

“If we improved this area, might it make other areas easier?”

For example, improving chaotic morning routines might reduce lateness, parent-child conflict and exhaustion.

Treat this as a working hypothesis, not proof that one issue causes everything.

PAGE 3 — PRIORITISE

What deserves focused attention now?

SAFETY GATE

Some concerns sit outside ordinary family prioritisation.

If there is violence, coercive control, sexual abuse, child abuse, stalking, serious intimidation, credible threats, fear of retaliation or immediate danger:

Do not place the concern into ordinary planning categories as though it were competing with routine family priorities.

TogetherWell's principle remains:

Safety concerns cannot be averaged away by strengths elsewhere in the family.

Safeguarding comes first.

10. Sort concerns into planning categories

These are planning categories, not clinical severity ratings or risk classifications.

FOCUS NOW

Deserves concentrated attention now.

PREPARE FIRST

Important, but the next responsible step is more understanding, information, support, assessment or preparation.

KEEP IN VIEW

Worth monitoring, but does not currently require concentrated action.

PARK FOR LATER

A real concern, but another priority currently needs the family's limited attention.

“Not now” is different from “does not matter.”

11. Choose one primary priority

OUR CURRENT PRIMARY PRIORITY

Why this one now?

Who is most affected?

What might improve if we address it?

What strength do we want to preserve while working on it?

A secondary priority is optional, not expected.

OPTIONAL SECONDARY PRIORITY

If two priorities make meaningful action unrealistic, return to one.

PAGE 4 — DEFINE & PREPARE

Turn the priority into a strategy-ready change target

A priority such as:

“Communication”

is too broad.

A change target such as:

“Reduce shouting during financial disagreements and create a calmer way to discuss major money decisions”

is more useful.

A useful change target should be:

specific enough to recognise;

connected to the chosen priority;

within reasonable influence;

not framed mainly as changing another person's personality.

12. Define the change target

Priority area:

What is happening now?

What would we like to see instead?

What specific pattern, condition or practice should change or strengthen?

13. What is within our control, influence or outside our control?

WE CAN CONTROL:

Example: whether we make a promise before discussing it with our spouse.

WE CAN INFLUENCE:

Example: whether relatives understand a new boundary.

OUTSIDE OUR CONTROL:

Example: whether every relative approves of the boundary.

Strategy should focus primarily on responsible action within the family's real sphere of influence.

14. Does this need something beyond relationship strategy?

Some problems require practical or specialist support rather than mainly better communication.

We may need:

☐ A difficult conversation
☐ Family Pattern Map
☐ More information
☐ Financial review or advice
☐ Medical input
☐ Developmental assessment
☐ Mental-health support
☐ Legal advice
☐ Safeguarding support
☐ Housing/community/social support
☐ Support from extended family
☐ Agreement between caregivers
☐ Other: _____

If the main pressure is structural or resource-related, the strategy may need financial, medical, legal, community, housing or social support, not merely relational effort.

15. Who needs to participate?

People who should help understand or address this priority:

People who should be informed but do not need to make the decision:

People who should not carry adult responsibility:

FAMILY PRIORITY BRIEF

Ready to transfer into Tool 5

Priority area:

What is happening:

Why it matters now:

What we want to see instead:

The specific change target:

What we can control or influence:

What strength we want to preserve:

What we need before action:

This brief can transfer directly into the Simple Family Wellness Strategy Plan.

A PRIORITY IS NOT A VERDICT

Choosing one priority does not mean everything else in the family is failing.

It does not mean the person most connected to the issue is “the problem.”

TogetherWell's principle remains:

The family is a profile, not a percentage.

Families can contain strengths, strain, difference and changing needs at the same time.

DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES CAN STILL INFORM THE PRIORITY

One spouse may identify finances.

Another may identify communication.

A parent may be concerned about a child's behaviour.

The child may experience adult conflict as the greater problem.

Difference is data, but different perspectives do not mean every factual claim is equally accurate.

Ask:

“What is each person seeing that others may be missing?”

Consensus can be useful, but forced consensus is not required before every provisional planning decision.

CONNECTION TO FAMILY WELLNESS

A family priority may sit anywhere in family wellness: personal wellbeing, relationships, communication, conflict, partnership, parenting, routines and resources, wider-family boundaries, shared meaning or resilience.

This worksheet does not score those areas.

If you have completed a broader Family Wellness reflection, you may use this worksheet to decide which identified area deserves focused attention now. This does not turn the reflection into a validated assessment or severity measure.

HOW THIS TOOL FITS THE TOGETHERWELL RESOURCE SYSTEM

Family Pattern Map:
What keeps happening?

Family Values, Vision & Direction Conversation Guide:
What matters to us and what kind of family are we trying to become?

Family Priority Worksheet:
What deserves our attention now?

Simple Family Wellness Strategy Plan:
What exactly will we do about it?

Keeping these questions separate helps families avoid jumping directly from a vague concern to a solution.

RESOURCE NOTE

The TogetherWell Family Priority Worksheet is a structured educational and family-reflection resource.

It is non-diagnostic, non-psychometric, non-scored and non-norm-referenced.

The planning categories in this worksheet are not clinical severity ratings, risk levels or diagnostic classifications.

The worksheet does not prove that the selected priority is objectively the family's biggest problem. It helps participants make a structured decision about what deserves focused attention now.

One completed worksheet reflects the perspectives available at that point in time. Other family members may understand the situation differently.

Where significant safety, developmental, mental-health, medical, legal or structural concerns are present, appropriate specialist or practical support may be needed.

THE CENTRAL IDEA

Families usually cannot work on everything at once.

Good prioritisation asks:

What have we noticed?

What matters most now?

Who is affected?

What does the context tell us?

What are we ready to do next?

What specific change target should move into strategy?

NOTICE → CONSIDER → PRIORITISE → DEFINE → PREPARE

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