

# Promoting Professional Conduct

## Professional Conduct, Teamwork, and Patient Safety

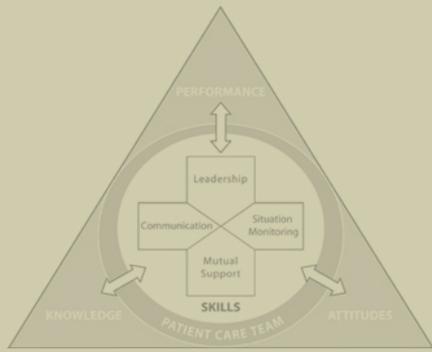




# Introductory Scenario

- Safety and quality of patient care are dependent on teamwork, communication, and a collaborative work environment.

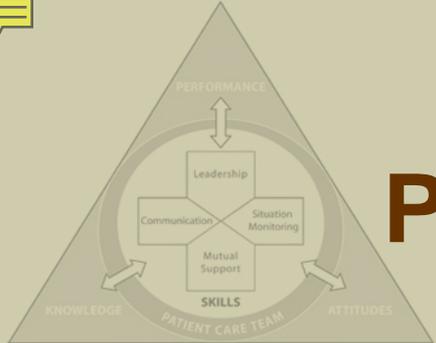




# Performance Objectives

- Identify two approaches for responding to unprofessional conduct—enforcement and engagement.
- Describe four steps for responding to unprofessional conduct.
- Assess whether and how to respond to unprofessional conduct.
- Differentiate between a competitive (power-based) and a collaborative stance.
- Describe the two-stage *Connect & Correct* technique.

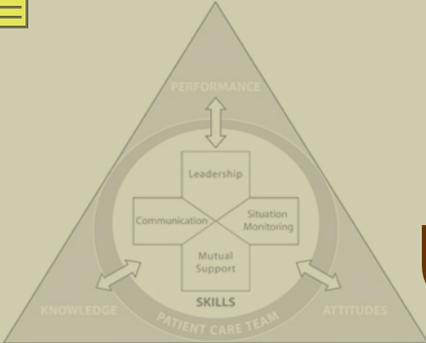




# Professional Conduct and High-Performing Teams

- Professional conduct contributes to safe patient care and is a key component of high performing teams.
- Reinforcing professional conduct expectations within the team:
  - Is a form of self-correction
  - Provides mutual support
  - Reinforces trust
  - Provides needed feedback
  - Is a key component of care coordination





# Unprofessional Conduct

- Unprofessional conduct is behavior that interferes with effective communication and negatively impacts team performance and patient care.
- People who exhibit disruptive behavior require feedback to increase their awareness of the impact their behavior has on team relationships and patient care.
- Disruptive behaviors may also indicate system issues that require further assessment.



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*TeamSTEPPS*

# Unprofessional Conduct and Team Conflict



- Unprofessional conduct contributes to conflict within the team.
- Conflict can be good when it is used to develop creative solutions to complex problems.
- Engaging in conflict requires constructive approaches that address the relational aspects of team performance.



# Two Approaches: Enforcement & Engagement

- Actions to promote professional conduct occur at both the individual and system levels.
- Two approaches for promoting professional conduct are:
  - Enforcement (power based)
  - Engagement (collaborative)



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# Engagement

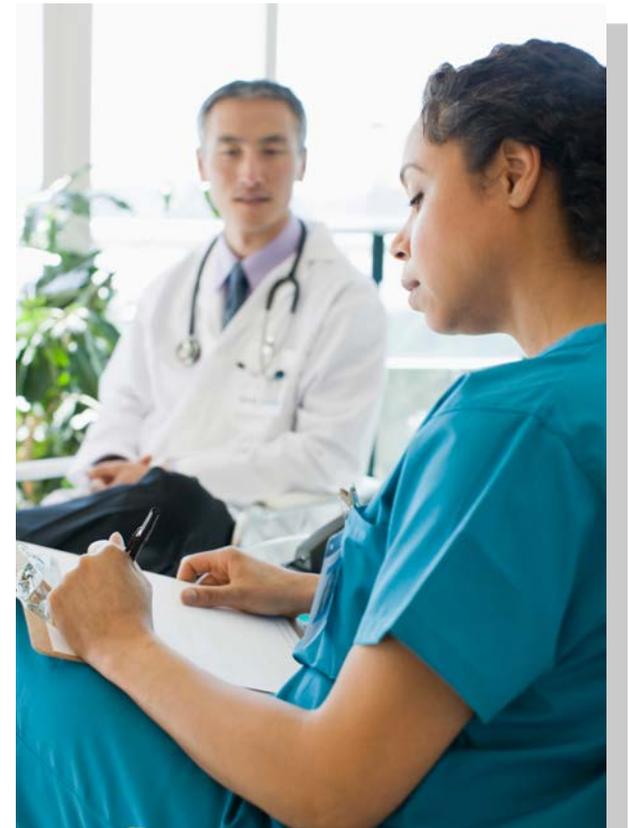
- Engagement is a collaborative approach that seeks to correct the behavior while preserving or restoring trust among team members.
- *Connect & Correct* is a collaborative engagement approach.



# TeamSTEPPS

## Four Steps for Responding to Unprofessional Conduct

- Addressing instances of unprofessional behavior in order to improve patient safety is the job of all team members.
- Four Steps for Responding to Unprofessional Conduct:
  - Assess
  - Adopt a stance
  - Connect & Correct
  - Evaluate



# TeamSTEPPS

## Assessing Whether and How to Engage

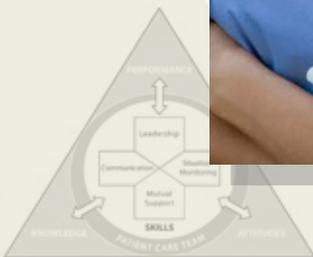
- Determining whether and how to address a difficult situation requires assessment of the risks—to you and to others
- Routinely avoiding a difficult conversation can lead to patient harm and does not provide needed feedback to team members
- Engaging effectively requires that you are both assertive and cooperative.



# Adopting a Competitive Stance



- A competitive (power-based) stance is high in assertiveness and low in cooperativeness.
- A competitive stance prioritizes an immediate outcome over the need for a good relationship with the individual. It is most effective in crisis situations or where there is an imminent risk.



# TeamSTEPPS

## Adopting a Competitive Stance: Examples

- **CUS**—I'm concerned. I'm uncomfortable. This is a safety issue.
- **Two-Challenge Rule**—Assertively voicing a concern at least two times to ensure that it has been heard.

*These are good techniques for ensuring that your concern is heard when there is an imminent risk to patient care.*



# Adopting a Collaborative Stance

- A collaborative stance is high in assertiveness and high in cooperativeness. It reflects a “yes, and” approach.
- A collaborative stance is useful when:
  - You try a competitive stance and get resistance
  - You want to fully understand a situation
  - You want to learn together
  - You want to find the most creative solution



## Exercise: Adopting a Stance

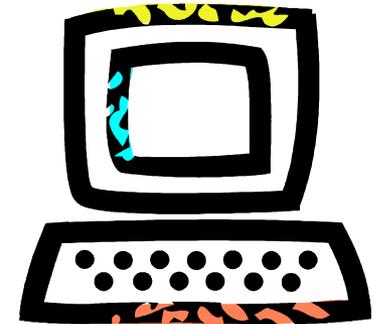
- Consciously choosing how to engage rather than defaulting to a habitual style takes practice and self reflection.
- A collaborative stance entails inviting the other person to work with you and acknowledging what they may need in order to do so.



# Connect & Correct

- Using the two-stage collaborative process *Connect & Correct*:
  - Improves the likelihood that the feedback will be received
  - Does not compromise the work relationship
  - Sets the stage for productive problem solving.

**NOTE:** See *the Connect & Correct Tip Sheet in the Toolkit Additional Resources folder*



# Raising Awareness



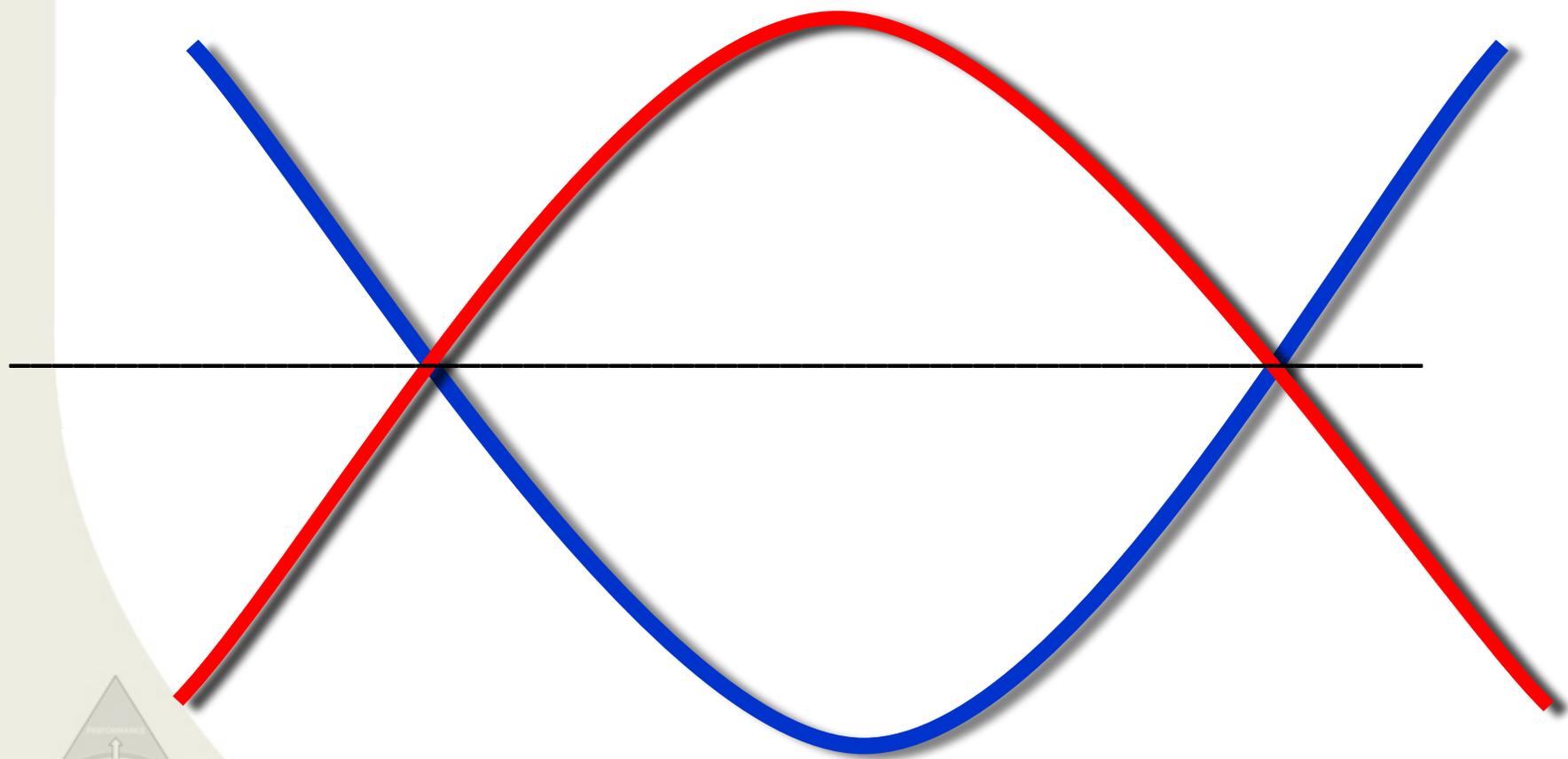
- The vast majority of people are unaware that their behavior is having a negative impact on others.
- This is particularly true if they are upset and are not connected to others, but are instead in fight-or-flight mode.





# TeamSTEPPS

## EMOTION



## REASONING



# TeamSTEPPS

## Stage 1: Connect

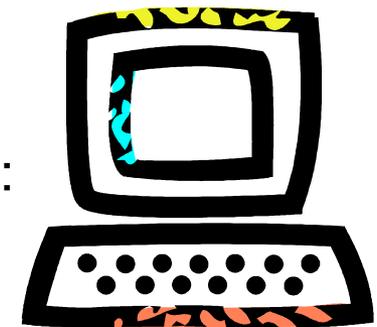
- The first stage, *Connect*, focuses on creating a connection with the other person and building trust.
- By creating a connection first you:
  - De-escalate the situation
  - Develop trust with the person
  - Gain deeper understanding of the situation
  - Demonstrate respect



# Connect: PEARLA

- To *connect*, use the following algorithm:
- **PEARLA**
  - Presence
  - Empathy
  - Acknowledgement
  - Reflect/reframe
  - Listen openly
  - Ask questions

**NOTE:** See *the* Tips and Tools for Connecting: PEARLA Tip Sheet *in the Toolkit Additional Resources folder*



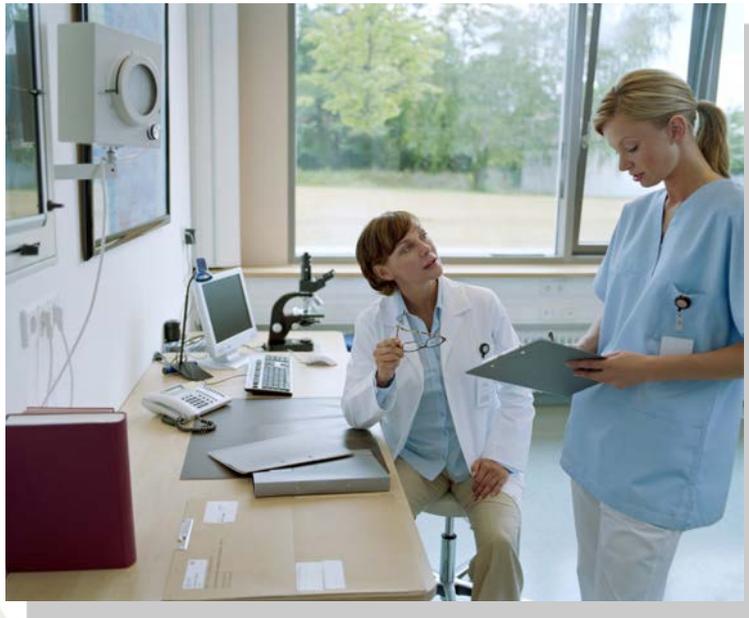
# Connect: PEARLA Presence and Empathy

- **Presence:** To create connection, you must first focus on the situation that is occurring between you and the other person.
- **Empathy:** Putting yourself in another's shoes and imagining what might be going on for them is a key element in creating connection.



# TeamSTEPPS

## Connect: PEARLA Acknowledgement



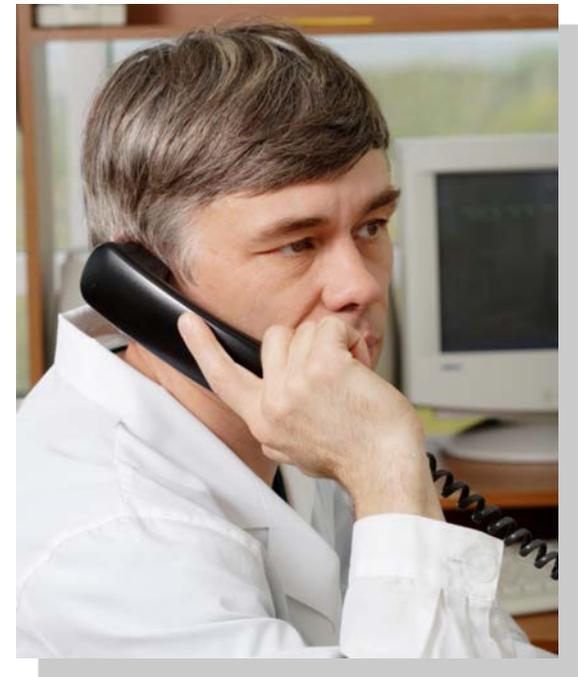
- **Acknowledging** what is going on for the other person is a crucial step in helping them to calm down and helping them to hear what you have to say.
- Acknowledging what matters, particularly when someone is upset, takes practice.



## Acknowledgement: Example 2

**Physician:** You have no clue about what we do here. All you pay attention to is the bottom line, and patient care is suffering because of it.

**Administrator:** You're right that I don't have your level of experience caring for patients. Tell me what you are most worried about regarding these proposed changes.



# TeamSTEPPS

## Connect (PEARLA) Reflect and Reframe

- **Reflect:** Reflecting back what you heard using neutral language is a good way to both check that you heard correctly and de-escalate the situation.
- **Reframe:** Reframing means to take a concept, idea, or statement and say it in a way that helps the person view the situation differently. It is a way of refocusing the conversation toward the issues and what matters to the person—and away from blame or rigid positions.



# Reflect and Reframe: Example

## Person 1:

It figures that the new person was involved in this. It seems like every time something bad happens, he's had something to do with it.

## Person 2:

- Rarely is one person to blame for everything that goes wrong. What do you think contributed to this particular situation?

OR—

- So you're saying you're concerned about the quality of care on this unit. What concerns you most?

OR—

- It's hard to say what happened since he's not here. Have you spoken to him directly about your concerns?



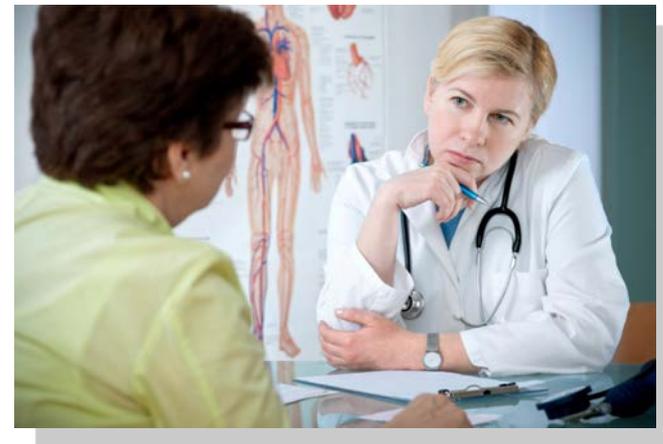
# TeamSTEPPS

## Connect (PEARLA): Listening Openly

*“The opposite of listening is preparing to speak.”*

*Bill Isaacs*

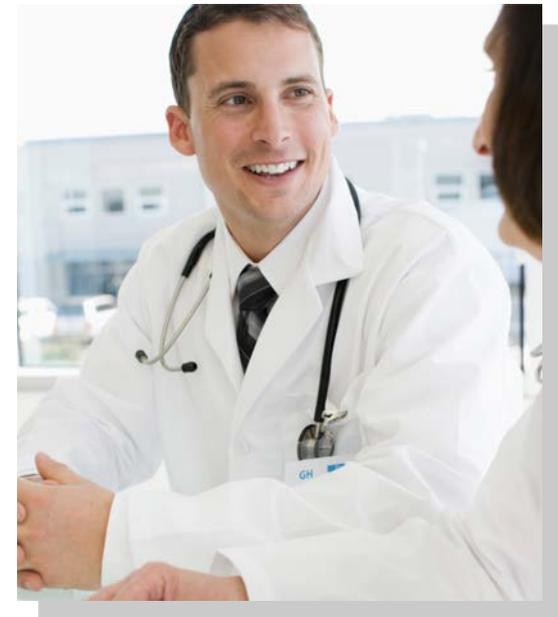
- **Listening openly** requires that you listen to the facts, listen to the emotions, notice the body language, and listen for the meaning behind the words.



# TeamSTEPPS

## Connect (PEARLA) Ask clarifying questions

- Ask questions that clarify the situation and show you are interested in what matters to the person speaking.
- Clarifying questions are also a good way to help the person become aware of how they are behaving.
- Tone of voice matters when asking clarifying questions. Avoid asking “why” questions.



# Sample Clarifying Questions

- Tell me—what would help you right now?
- Where would be a better place to have this conversation?
- What does respect look like to you?
- What is going on that has you so upset?
- What do you think is the impact of your behavior?
- What do you hope to accomplish by talking this way?
- How is this helping you get what you need?



# Creating Connection

**Understand first.**

**Explain later...**



## Stage 2: Correct

- To address lapses in professional conduct, it is important to remember that you are solving two problems:
  1. Restoring trust among team members
  2. Problem solving to correct the behavior
- In Stage 2, you seek *correction* of the behavior by describing it, describing the impact, suggesting an alternative, and seeking agreement.



# TeamSTEPPS

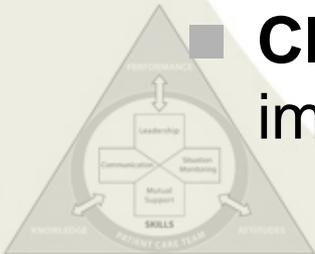
## Stage 2: Correct

- Using the TeamSTEPPS<sup>®</sup> DESC script is one way to seek correction of unprofessional behaviors.
- **DESC:**
  - Describe the specific behavior
  - Express how it makes you feel and what your concerns are
  - Suggest alternatives and seek agreement
  - Clarify the consequences in terms of the impact on goals of the team



## Stage 2: DESC Script Sample

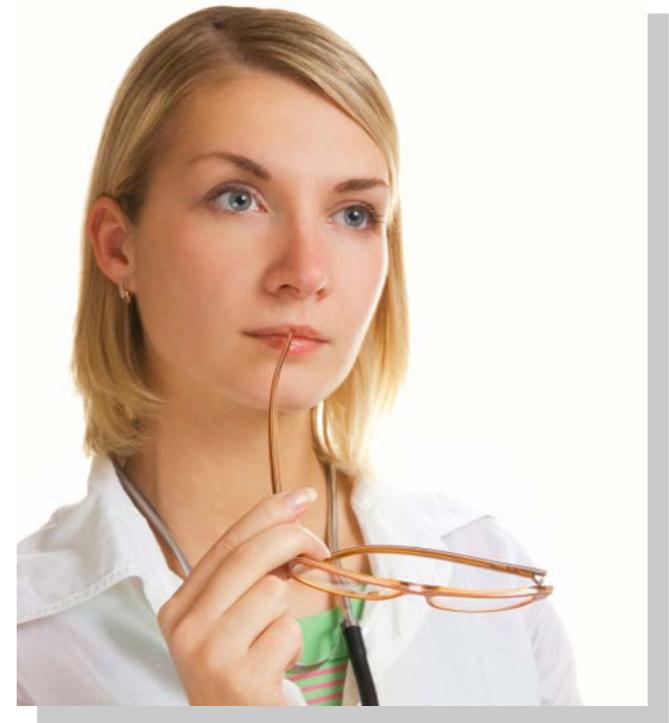
- **Describe:** When you don't answer pages or return phone calls ...
- **Explain:** I am worried that I won't be able to give safe care to the patient.
- **Seek alternatives and agreement:** I need for you to respond or have someone call for you if you are busy. Is that something you could try?
- **Clarify Consequences:** If not, it is going to have an impact on patient care and how much I can trust you.



# Evaluate

The final step in the four-step process for responding to unprofessional conduct is to evaluate progress. It is good to evaluate the following:

- Your skills and abilities in responding
- The outcome of your conversations —what changed?
- Next steps if any are required
- Identify your support system



# Exercise: Engagement Approach

- **Engagement** happens when the issues are dealt with directly by those involved in the incident rather than merely reporting the incident to someone else.



# Summary

- Disruptive and intimidating behaviors undermine team effectiveness, compromise the safety of patients, and contribute to unhealthy work environments.
- Actions to promote professional conduct occur at both the individual and system levels.
- Two approaches for promoting professional conduct are:
  - Enforcement (power based)
  - Engagement (collaborative)



# Summary

- **Assess**—Risk to me/Risk to others
- **Adopt a stance**—Competitive/Collaborative
- **Connect & Correct**—PEARLA & DESC
- **Evaluate**—Self, outcome, next steps, support

