



In April 2005, the Alabama Department of Human Resources (DHR), Child Care Services Division, convened representatives from various early care and education stakeholder groups to begin planning for a professional development system to address the training and education needs of caregivers and teachers in the field of early childhood and school-age care. This collaborative effort was in response to the Bush Administration's *Good Start, Grow Smart (GSGS)* initiative "for the purpose of improving the preparation and ongoing development of early care and education providers." The goal of the *Alabama Child Care and Education Professional Development System* or ***Alabama Pathways to Quality Care and Education (Alabama Pathways)*** is "to provide a path to support and advance the best practices of those who care for and teach children from birth through 12 years."

Alabama Pathways is designed to assist individuals who work in various early childhood and school-age care settings identify appropriate professional preparation and ongoing professional development that is specific to child development and early childhood education. The early childhood and school-age care professionals who benefit from participating in ***Alabama Pathways*** care for and teach children in programs that are required to be licensed and those that are exempt from being licensed.

The ***Alabama Pathways Professional Development Lattice*** is a system that provides early care and education professionals with a tool to track their professional development. Each individual can identify her/his current place on the ***Alabama Pathways Professional Development Lattice***, as well as the progressive path to enhanced training and education within the field of early care and education.

The ***Alabama Pathways*** brochure is on the DHR web site at www.dhr.alabama.gov in the [regular brochure version](#) and in a [printer friendly version](#). If access to a computer is a barrier to obtaining ***Alabama Pathways***, hard copies of the brochure can be obtained by individuals by calling the Child Care Services Division at (334) 242-1425 or toll free at (866) 528-1694 and asking to speak with a Quality Enhancement Coordinator.