

February

Your Role...

You help foster problem solving not so much by providing special materials or specific activities but by having a responsive, accepting attitude.

Here are other key ways to facilitate your young adult's growth:

- **Follow his/her lead.** By observing his/her interactions and dilemmas, you can support their problem-solving efforts and help them accomplish their goals.
- **Reinforce his/her solutions.** Let him/her know that their ideas and efforts are valued.
- **Extend creative thinking and problem solving.** Ask open-ended questions about activities to help children see the problem they are trying to solve in new and different ways.
- **Challenge.** Encourage your daughter or son to practice critical and logical thinking by asking them open-ended questions, such as "How many ways can you make this _____?" "How many different ways can you get to work or school?" "How would traveling be different if taken by a car, bus, or by train?"
- **Listen.** Asking questions about things that don't make sense is another way children express critical thinking. When a child wonders, "Why do I have a shadow on the playground but not inside?" or "Why can't I see the wind?" you don't need to respond with one right answer. Instead, encourage children to express their ideas.