

**Thomas F. Tonniges, MD, FAAP**, is the Director of the Department of Community Pediatrics at the American Academy of Pediatrics, and Clinical Professor of Pediatrics at the University of Nebraska Medical Center. He received his BS degree from Doane College in Crete, Nebraska, and graduated from the University of Nebraska Medical Center in 1974. Dr. Tonniges completed his pediatric training at Bridgeport Hospital, Bridgeport, Connecticut, and the University of Nebraska Medical Center.

Following his training, Dr. Tonniges started a pediatric practice in rural Nebraska. Going from a solo practitioner to a practice that included four pediatricians, a nurse practitioner, and many other health professionals, the practice served the needs of children in south central Nebraska and northern Kansas. His innovative practice included family supports, such as a social worker, group well-child exams, and a literacy program. During his 18 years of rural pediatric practice, he helped develop local and state level programs for underserved children and children with special health care needs. His work included such programs as the Rural Partnership for Children—a Healthy Tomorrows Partnership for Children Program collaborative project between the American Academy of Pediatrics and the federal Maternal and Child Health Bureau, serving on the first Nebraska Child Abuse Trust Fund Board, the first Nebraska Child Death Review Team, and the first Nebraska Interagency Coordinating Council for the implementation of Public Law 99-457.

In his current position at the Academy as the director of the Department of Community Pediatrics, Dr. Tonniges directs several national programs including the Healthy Tomorrows Partnership for Children Program, the Community Access to Child Health (CATCH) Program, the National Center of Medical Home Initiatives for Children with Special Health Care Needs, the Breastfeeding Promotion in Pediatric Office Practices Program, and the Healthy Child Care America Program. All of these programs support pediatricians in their involvement in community settings to improve the quality of health care for children.