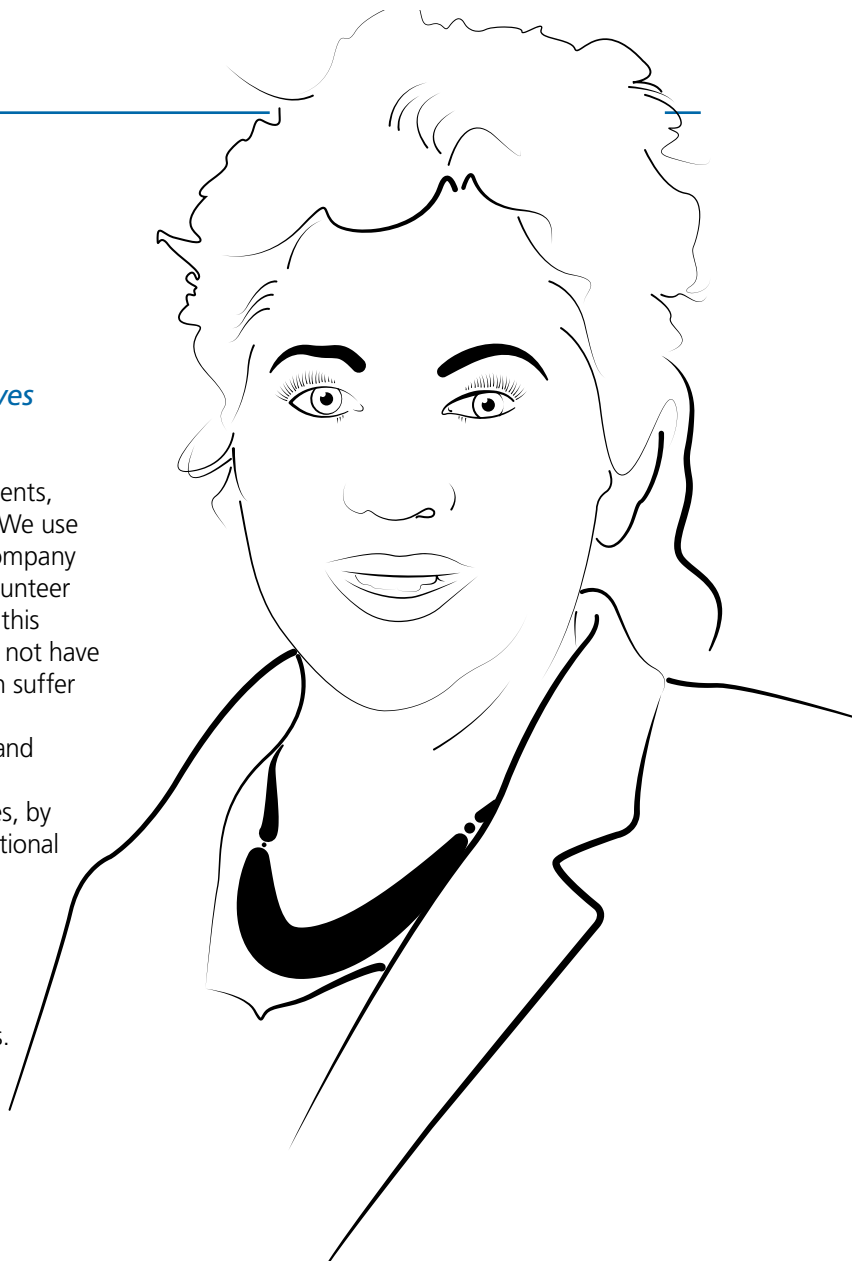


## Marietjie Weakley introduces the PSSA

### *What have been the most substantial initiatives promoted by your Scientific Society to date?*

We started our Outreach Program in 2010 to help disadvantaged children. These stay in informal settlements, orphanages or come from local charity organisations. We use a sponsored clinic, the Brånemark Institute, and the company Wright Millners is our sponsor for dental materials; volunteer dentists assist in this project. There is a great need for this project to expand – we have so many children that do not have access to proper dental care and thousands of children suffer daily from tooth decay.

The objectives of our society are: promote oral health and wellbeing of the children of South Africa by facilitating continuing education, courses, seminars and congresses, by promoting outreach projects and by distributing educational material to the public; stimulate enthusiasm amongst colleagues to strive for excellence in Paediatric Dentistry. We also promote education and research in paediatric dentistry, foster the preventative and therapeutic practice of the discipline, provide dentists with the latest information on paedodontic treatments. We seek affiliation with similar international organisations and strive to have the practice of Paediatric Dentistry recognised as a specialty by the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA) and to assist in establishing an appropriate curriculum at the various tertiary academic institutions.



### PAEDODONTIC SOCIETY OF SOUTH AFRICA



#### Brief history of the Scientific Society

The Paedodontic Society of South Africa was started in 1980 by a group of young dentists who were genuinely interested in the welfare of their patients, with the intent of practicing the gold standard of dentistry and maintaining the high reputation of South African dentists among the international community. In 2008, we became an active part of the global dental community: we hosted a group of 30 American dentists, and became honorary members of the American Association of Pediatric Dentists; then we became fully fledged members of the IAPD (International

Association of Pediatric Dentistry) and hosted the 1st African Regional Congress. We are in the process of affiliating with the SADA (The South African Dental Association). We are going to apply for hosting the 2023 International IAPD Congress. We are also planning to have the Regional African Congress within the next 2 years and hopefully make it a regular meeting. We host regular Continuing Education Program meetings and have an outreach program that involves treating underprivileged children.

**Country:** South Africa

**Established in:** 1980

**Admission procedure:** New members must complete a form that is available on our website. After approval, a yearly fee is paid. SADA (The South African Dental Association) will, in future, assist with collection of annual fees.

**Number of members:** PAbout 200. We are in the process of restructuring and

entering an affiliation with the South African Dental Association (SADA). This will enable us to reach more than 80% of the Dentists in our country and we hope to have soon many more members!

#### **Board of Directors:**

**President:** Dr Marietjie Weakley

**Immediate Past President:**

Dr Janet Gritzman

**Vice President:** Dr Bradley Selvan

**Honorary Secretary:**

Dr Sameera Yusufmia

Honorary Treasurer: Dr Stephen Horwitz

**Location:** Gauteng (Johannesburg) and

Cape Town. With our new strategy,

we hope to be able to cover the whole

country. Currently almost 24 % of our

population is in the Gauteng Province.

We thus, are servicing a significant part

of our population, but are looking at

further expanding in the near future.

**Website:** [www.ourchildrensteeth.co.za](http://www.ourchildrensteeth.co.za)

**e-mail:** [drmw@dental-ladies.co.za](mailto:drmw@dental-ladies.co.za)

## COUNTRY DEMOGRAPHIC AND EPIDEMIOLOGICAL DATA

## COUNTRY



## South Africa

POPULATION million

55,908,900

MEDIAN AGE OF THE POPULATION

♂ | ♀ **26.8 years**  
26.5 27

## NUMBER OF DENTISTS

6,147



200

Dentists registered as SADA members

## DATA ON GRADUATE AND POST-GRADUATE SCHOOLS

Number of dental schools **4**Number of years to complete the undergraduate graduation Course **5**

During which year is pediatric dentistry taught?

3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> year

How long does this specific course last?

3<sup>rd</sup> year

1 hour lecture every week of the academic year

4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> year

1 hour lecture every week plus a 4-hour clinical session every week of the academic year

Is there a Post-Graduate Course in Pediatric Dentistry?

yes: an MSc and a post-graduate diploma in Paediatric Dentistry

How long does this specific course last?

2–3 years

## POPULATION BELOW 18 YEARS

21,890,600

30% under 15 years



## DMFT index

DMFT 6 years



dmft 2-4 years



DMFT 12 years



DAI (Dental aesthetic index)

12 years



PJ Van Wyk, C Van Wyk. Oral health in South Africa. Int Dental J. 2004; 54:373-7

**What is the level of collaboration between dentists and pediatricians?**

This is an area that needs improvement. In some areas, many of the local paediatricians know, by word of mouth, which dental practices offer paedodontic services, and they refer patients. We do, however, have a list of "child-friendly dentists" on our website, which could assist the pediatricians and patients to know which dentists treat children. We are planning to launch a country-wide awareness program to rectify this situation.

**What would be necessary to improve children's oral health?**

We need to do a lot more education for children and parents. Lots of our country's people live in poverty and do not have access to proper dental care. The government facilities are inadequate and not enough to service all our people. A lot of private and public partnerships are being formed and much is already being done to help with this situation. I am involved with

such an organisation, called Rhiza Trust Foundation. We have a few Mobile Medical and Dental Clinics in the informal settlement areas. If we could get resources for more Mobile Clinics on an ongoing basis, it would help us tremendously. We need the funds not only to have the clinics built, but also to sustain them, pay the staff, etc. The waiting list for children that need to have dental work done (mostly extractions) under general anaesthesia in the government facilities is sometimes up to 1 year. Our local government is in the process of implementing inhalation sedation (nitrous oxide sedation), to try and help some of these children.

**What are the association's future projects?**

As mentioned above, we are in a transition period and are very optimistic and excited about the future! We look forward to having our field of interest registered as a Specialty in South Africa soon! We are passionate about helping children to become dentally healthy and knowledgeable about their teeth!