



Parents making Montessori possible

Dear Parents

Please meet our energetic and amazing SAMA ExCo team:

SAMA is a voluntary association with an office in Port Elizabeth. It was originally formed by a few very dedicated Montessori school owners 12 years ago, and has survived through sheer dedication and the sacrifice of many personal hours, with volunteers coming and going over the years.

Jacky Price

President, NAISA representative,
Western Cape JLC representative
(Owner of Blue Moon Montessori School,
Cape Town)

Jenni Petersen

General Secretary
(Principal of Stepping Stones Montessori
Pre-school, Cape Town)

Peter Williams:

Treasurer
(Trustee of Montessori Connect group,
Cape Town)

Kym van Straaten:

Newsletter Editor, Conference Chair,
Gauteng JLC representative
(Owner of Randburg Montessori and
Montessori Campus Training Centre)

Xanthe Bester:

Conference Planning, Sponsorship,
Fundraising and ECDI representative
(Owner of Monaghan Montessori,
Gauteng)

Michelle Wareham:

Ordinary member and ECD CoP
(Community of Practice) representative.
(Co-Owner of Gardens Montessori,
Gauteng)

Mariana van Niekerk:

New ordinary member
(Owner of Somerset West Montessori
School, Somerset West)

Stacey Holmes:

New ordinary member
(Freelance Lecturer and owner of
Milestones Montessori)

Nicky Rodseth:

New ordinary member
(Owner of Montessori Life, Durban)

Employed staff

Irmgard Pringle:
Executive Office Administrator

Marinda Stolk:
Office Assistant

This past weekend, the SAMA ExCo team spent two days under the expert guidance of Harris Gordon, the treasurer of Association Montessori International / USA, a management consultant partner at Price Waterhouse Coopers and the vice-president of the management consulting division of KPMG.

Harris was asked to guide SAMA in developing a strategy and vision for Montessori in South Africa and, in time, for Africa. And what a long list of initiatives we came up with over the two days. The bottom line is: why are we not spreading and growing this classic, yet revolutionary method of education across all communities and age groups? As Trevor Eissler of *Montessori Madness!* says: "Montessori is the world's best kept secret!" South African education, as in some other countries around the world, is in difficulty, with the focus being on the continuation of the same old, inappropriate, traditional thinking. Clem Sunter, in his opening address at our recent SAMA national conference, emphasised that the South African schooling system could help to turn around our economy if it could start to produce a generation of entrepreneurs.

Moving away from single age, direct teaching and standardised testing, you will find in our Montessori environments mixed ages, collaborative peer-mentoring, research driven, learning through intrinsic motivation, independent children with teachers as guides. You will find learning that uses developmentally appropriate practices rather than imposed curriculums.

You may ask: "What does the work of SAMA have to do with me?" One of the initiatives raised this weekend came from the question: "Who are our suppliers?" Well, our families, of course. So the next question was: "Where are all the families that have been part of Montessori over the last four decades, at least, and where are the children who are now parents themselves?" How could we be so remiss as to not follow our Montessori children through their life journeys after their initial Montessori experiences? Why have we not involved our Montessori families in the growth of Montessori education in South Africa?

Please watch this space as we begin to put together ways to connect all of our past, present and future Montessori families. We intend to look for support from you to drive our initiatives, such as an alumni gathering, or invite individual parent SAMA memberships and in this way, grow much, much more Montessori.

Please take a look at the Trevor Eissler's video clip: *Montessori Madness!*
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GcgN0IEh5IA>

Warm regards
Jacky