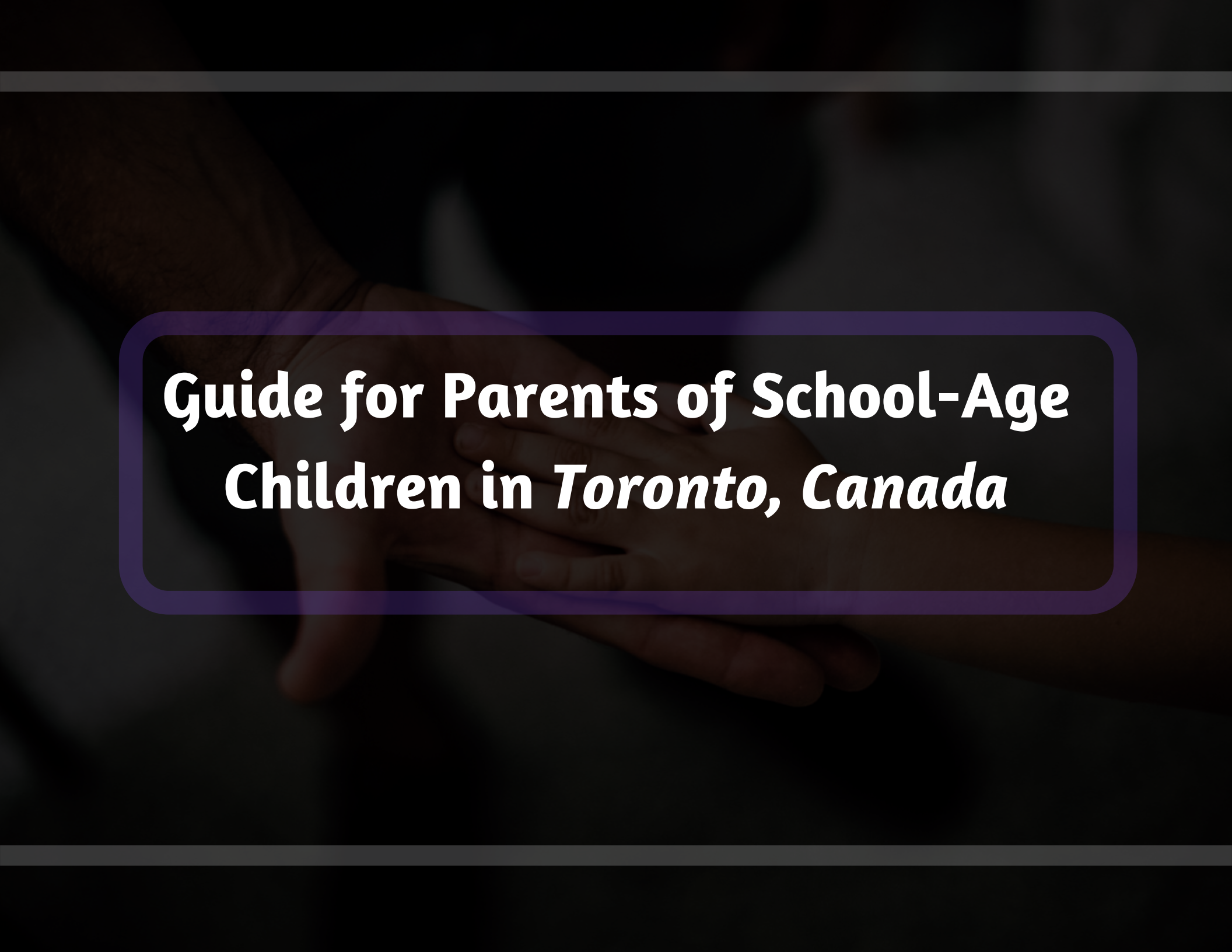


The background of the slide is a dark, low-key photograph of several hands of different skin tones being held together in a supportive grip. The hands are positioned in the center and lower half of the frame, with fingers interlaced or overlapping. The lighting is soft, highlighting the textures of the skin and the veins on the hands. The overall mood is one of care, protection, and community.

Guide for Parents of School-Age Children in *Toronto, Canada*

Introduction

The guide serves as a pool of the necessary information revolving around programs for school-age children in Toronto, Canada.

At the peak of the guide, as a parent one will have a clear understanding of the following topics.

- Child Care and Program Options.
- Quality Indicators for the Program.
- Narrowing to Making A Decision for the Program



Child Care and Program Options Before School Program

Child care and programs before school, often referred to as EarlyON Child, are quite many in Toronto. Some of the agency options include;

- West Scarborough Neighbourhood Community Centre.
- Macaulay Child Development Centre.
- Regent Park Community Health Centre.
- Agincourt Community Services Association.
- Conseil Scolaire -Viamonde.

Examples of Programs offered by the agencies include;

- Lawrence EarlyON Child and Family Centre.
- Access Alliance Play Group EarlyON Child and Family Centre.
- Agincourt Community Services EarlyON Child & Family Centre.
- Banting Best EarlyON Child and Family Centre.
- Barbara Frum Library EarlyON Child and Family Centre.

Child Care and Program Options After School Program

After school programs are equally important. This stage calls for diligence since it is likely to shape up the child on various levels. In Toronto, there are numerous after school programs that offer quality child care and programs.

Some of the rated options by City of Toronto include;

- A & A Child Care Centre - Focuses on children aged 0-12 years.
- After Four Children's Enrichment Program - Focuses on children aged 6-12 years.
- Alternative Primary School Parent Group - Focuses on children aged 2-12 years.
- Beverly Glen YMCA. Focuses on children aged 4-12 years.
- Brian Drive School Age Program (YMCA) - Focuses on children aged 6-12 years.
- Indian Road Crescent School Age YMCA - Focuses on children aged 4-12 years.
- Owen Community Learning Centre - Focuses on children aged 2-10 years.

Licensing and Regulations of Quality Programs

The field of school-age children is a sensitive docket, which has every parent worrying whether there are additional regulators of what an ideal school should look like.

The following are policies based on Child Care and Early Years Act 2014, that monitor and ensure there is indeed quality school programs in Toronto.

- A child care or program should not run without a licence to operate a child care centre.
- The use of the license should only be at the specified location.
- Application or renewals should be submitted to the director, approved by the minister and payment of regulatory fee.
- A license is not transferable.
- When the program is corporation, change of office has to be communicated 15 days prior.
- Every licensee shall comply with the conditions imposed on a licence.
- A licence can expire, be revoked or suspended, based on the regulations set.

Quality Indicators for the Program

Under the Protective Measure, Part II section from Child Care and Early Years Act 2014, there are key indicators that should indicate the legitimacy of a give program.

For day cares;

- No one should run a day care in more than one premise.
- Without a parent to care giver agreement, the child should not be transferred to another premise or care.
- The exception of unlicensed day care, there shouldn't be more than one child aged less than 2 years, the total number of children shouldn't exceed five.

For the authorized skill building and recreational programs. The following has to be met.

- Should not be operated at home.
- Should maintain it's primary purpose; offer child care.
- Should have children aged 6 years and above.
- Should offer the recommended curriculum.

Making a Choice

When it comes to making the right choice for you as a parent and for the child, there are key factors to be considered. Examples of main factors are;

- **Special Needs Aspect-** This narrows down to the exact choices to make, based on the type of special needs. For example if a kid is an albino, Toronto has Albion Early Learning & Child Care Centre for childre aged 0-4 years.
- **Finances** may also be on the line to dictate your choice as a parent. There programs that offer subsidies, e.g A & A Child Care Centre

The advantage of Toronto having a wide range of options is accommodation prospects, where there is a place for everybody.

The disadvantage would be quality control, since the there no specific merits to limit accommodation of groups, influenced by their own needs.

Additionally, the law allows and protects the diversity aspect, hence creating loop holes under the same law, which can be utilized haphazardly.