

“SIGNING AWAY” PARENTAL RIGHTS
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I have answered a number of legal questions on the AVVO website. I have found that an inordinate number of people think that you can "sign away" your parental rights. There are the mothers of children who find that their first choice for their baby's father was not a good one, but now they have found the right one or they just want the father to get out of their lives. They want the dads to sign away their parental rights. There also are the biological fathers who are wrongfully being required to pay child support when all they did was have sex with a woman who for some reason gave birth to a baby. They want to sign away their parental rights. Were it not for restrictions based on good taste and probably the FCC, these would be great for condom ads.

In Virginia, your parental rights can be terminated by court order at the request of the Department of Social Services when your children have been placed in foster care because of your abuse or neglect, and they want to be able to place your children for adoption.

Your parental rights can be terminated when your children are adopted by someone else, so they are taking on your parental rights and responsibilities (like support).

You cannot just walk away from the responsibility of your children by signing away your parental rights unless someone is there to adopt the child. In Virginia, that someone has to be married to the mother. The mother cannot have her new boyfriend adopt her child. She also cannot have the bothersome father just sign a paper giving up his "rights".