

▪ **How can you contact CICS?**

**Contact** Telephone (03 51) 2 06 19 85  
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**Headquarters** Ehrlichstrasse 3, 01067 Dresden  
at Wohnpark Elsa Fenske run by Cultus gGmbH  
Also accessible via Freiberger Strasse 18  
Access and premises barrier-free

**Public transport** Tram lines 7, 10 and 12 to Freiberger Strasse  
Tram lines 1, 2, 6 and bus line 94 to Bahnhof  
Mitte  
S-Bahn (suburban train) to Freiberger Strasse

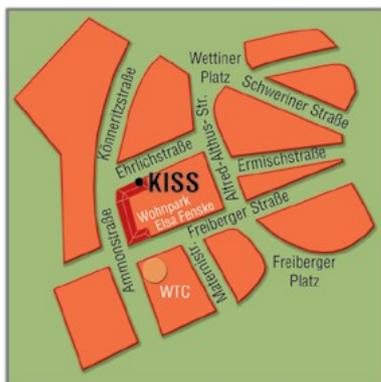
**Cars** Parking on Ehrlichstrasse or Freiberger Strasse  
(two parking bays at the entrance on  
Ehrlichstrasse 3)

**Consultation times** Monday 9am to 12pm  
Tuesday 9am to 6pm  
Thursday 9am to 6pm  
Friday 9am to 12pm  
and by appointment

**Address** City of Dresden  
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**Map**



**Imprint**

Publisher:  
City of Dresden

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Central authorities' switchboard 115 – We love questions

Editors:  
Marion Panek, Ina Richter

Overall production:  
designXpressdresden – advertising agency

7th (updated) edition, October 2015

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Contact and  
Information  
Centre for  
Self-help groups

[www.dresden.de/selbsthilfe](http://www.dresden.de/selbsthilfe)

## Self-help groups

*Isolation no more*

### ▪ **Why do self-help groups exist?**

Self-help groups are where people with health, mental or social problems come together as a way of better coping with their life situation alongside others in similar predicaments. The community offers them a point of contact, exchange, understanding and information, as well as balance and energy – but most importantly, a way of out their isolation, and options for resolving their difficulties.

*Getting active*

Self-help does not, by any means, render medical care or professional help redundant; it can instead serve to usefully supplement and provide support for these. The groups provide an opportunity to get active, making them an effective cornerstone for the health and social welfare system.

*Making a conscious change*

### ▪ **What can self-help groups do?**

The aims of the self-help groups are initially focused inwards – on their members. They want to take charge of changing their life circumstances voluntarily, equitably and based on a desire to support one another. Personal suffering gives rise to the need to engage in conversation with others, while own experiences ultimately spark the will to assist or help others.

*Raising awareness*

Self-help groups only get involved in the social or political sphere at a secondary level, e.g. to raise awareness about their situation in cases of illness or unique social situations, or to improve care and support services. While self-help groups are not generally run by professional helpers, they do occasionally call in experts to address specific issues.

*Stronger together*

Self-help group members meet regularly at a set location to:

- Share information and experiences,
- Express themselves and help each other,
- Collectively find ways of coping with problems,
- Jointly convey their interests to the outside world,
- Jointly get active for their own purposes,
- Do something in the community.

*A wide range of options*

### ▪ **What topics do groups meet up to discuss in Dresden?**

A wide range of self-help groups have established themselves in Dresden, with several thousand active members in 225 groups. There are groups for affected persons, and groups for their families.

The self-help groups and initiatives can be classified under the following health and social topics:

- Chronic illnesses
- Mental problems and illnesses
- Disabilities
- Addiction
- Parents, children and family
- Self-help for seniors
- Special social situations.

*Open to interested parties*

While most self-help groups are always open to interested parties, there are also some closed groups. It is important to thoroughly find out about which specific objectives connect the members, when they meet, what activities they do, and how they operate.

*About CICS*

### ▪ **How do I find the right self-help group?**

The Contact and Information Centre for Self-help groups – CICS (or KISS in German) – run by the Dresden Social Security Office offers general information and detailed counselling. The service is free of charge. Enquiries are treated confidentially. While CICS predominantly liaises with Dresden groups, it also has regional and national contacts.

## Contact and Information

## Centre for

## Self-help groups

*CICS Dresden*

### ▪ **What does CICS offer?**

- Advises citizens, groups, initiatives and experts on all matters relating to self-help,
- Provides general information and arranges specific contact with existing Dresden self-help groups, as well as with regional and national organisations,
- Offers interested parties personalised counselling in their search for suitable self-help services, while simultaneously referring them to professional care and support services,
- Initiates contact and dialogue between individual self-help groups,
- Provides professional support (funding options, library and info centre, continued education, dialogue partners, experts) and organisational support (premises, equipment, event preparation, PR) for self-help groups,
- Supports initiators of self-help groups, brings people with the same issues and problems together, and assists new groups during the start-up phase,
- Manages PR and organises promotions to raise awareness about self-help and the opportunities available.