**All in a day’s work: The health and welfare of children living in 19th century Staffordshire, UK**

Kirsty Squires (Kirsty.Squires@staffs.ac.uk)

Staffordshire University, UK

Children played a key role in coal mining and the pottery industry in 19th century Staffordshire (UK). The number of children that worked in this region during the study period fluctuated between 13% and 33%, and one fifth of the workforce comprised of 5-14 year olds. Long working hours and hazardous conditions had a detrimental effect on the health and well-being of children. Children working in coal mines were susceptible to stunted growth and respiratory conditions and were vulnerable to accidents, such as explosions and roof collapses. Stunted growth, lead poisoning, and silicosis were among the most common conditions experienced by those working in the pottery industry. Legislation was introduced over the course of the 19th century to improve the working conditions of children, though these were not wholly effective in the early 1800s. This paper aims to shed new light on the health and longevity of children that worked in 19th century Staffordshire. Census data, testimonies, and modern clinical data will be used to explore how their roles in industry ultimately affected their health and quality of life. It is hoped that this research will provide a more comprehensive insight into child labour in 19th century Staffordshire.