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Poppi Co-Founder Stephen Ellsworth joins DropOut Companies as Operating Partner

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DropOut Companies, a modern consumer products house creating the next wave of perennial food brands, is proud to announce Stephen Ellsworth, co-founder of Poppi, as Operating Partner.

In this role, Ellsworth will provide strategic support across DropOut's growing portfolio, leveraging his expertise in brand building, product innovation, and strategic scaling to support Dropout's mission of reimagining childhood classics for today's families.

"Stephen brings a rare combination of operational rigour and culturally relevant brand building," said Connor Blakley, Founder of DropOut Companies. "He and Allison established Poppi as the soda the next generation will grow up with. Bringing that level of category transformation to DropOut opens up extraordinary potential across our brands."

Ellsworth is widely recognised for helping transform Poppi alongside his wife from a homemade apple-cider-vinegar refresher into one of the fastest-growing beverage brands in the United States. After gaining early traction at local farmers' markets, Poppi surged in national awareness following its viral Shark Tank appearance in 2019. The brand passed $100 million in annual sales by 2023 and, in 2025, secured a strategic distribution partnership with PepsiCo valued at approximately $2 billion. Poppi is credited with reshaping the modern soda category through its focus on gut health, low sugar, and clean ingredients.

"DropOut is doing what Big Food should've done decades ago," said Ellsworth. "Connor is culture-obsessed and has a great pulse on what consumers want. Dropout's taking the foods we know and love and rebuilding them with better ingredients. It's the same playbook that made Poppi explode, and I'm excited to bring that energy to every category we touch."